

Message Text

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SUBJECT: EDITORIAL IN THE IRISH TIMES JUNE 13, 1978

FOLLOWING EDITORIAL APPEARED IN THE IRISH TIMES

JUNE 13, 1978 UNDER THE HEADING SURVIVAL:

MR. SEAN MACBRIDE'S PERSISTENCE IN ADVOCATING TOTAL
DISARMAMENT IS ENTIRELY ADMIRABLE. HE HAS BEEN
CRITICISED FOR BEING "UNREALISTIC," FOR AIMING TOO
HIGH FOR EXPECTING TOO MUCH TO BE DONE TOO QUICKLY.
IN REPLY, HE RECALLS - AS HE DID AGAIN YESTERDAY IN
HIS ADDRESS TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY - THE OPINION
OF THE FOUNDING FATHERS OF THE UNITED NATIONS: THAT
ANOTHER WORLD WAR WOULD ENDANGER THE SURVIVAL OF THE
HUMAN RACE, AND THAT THERE WAS, IN CONSEQUENCE, NO
ALTERNATIVE TO PEACE.

ARMS CONTROL, IN HIS VIEW, IS NOT AN ADEQUATE SUBSTITUTE
FOR TOTAL DISARMAMENT, WHICH HAS NOT BEEN SERIOUSLY
CONSIDERED IN THE LAST 17 YEARS, SINCE THE UNITED
STATES AND THE SOVIET UNION'S AGREED PRINCIPLES WERE
UNANIMOUSLY ENDORSED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY. NEGOTIA-
TIONS ON STRATEGIC ARMS LIMITATION (SALT), WHICH ARE
NOW IN PROGRESS, ARE ONLY TINKERING WITH THE PROBLEM.

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WHAT MR. MACBRIDE WANTS IS AN IMMEDIATE MORATORIUM
ON RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND DEPLOYMENT OF NEW
WEAPONS; A CONVENTION OUTLAWING THE USE OF NUCLEAR
AND OTHER WEAPONS OF MASSDESTRUCTION; AN END TO THE
PRODUCTION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS; AND THE ADOPTION OF THE
TWO PROPOSALS MADE BY THE UN SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE

APPOINTMENT OF AN ADVISORY BOARD, AND THE SETTING ASIDE
OF A PERCENTAGE OF THE MILITARY EXPENDITURE OF EACH
STATE TO BE APPLIED TO THE PROMOTION OF DISARMAMENT.

THE TROUBLE IS, OF COURSE, THAT PEOPLE - NATIONS AND
GOVERNMENTS - HAVE BECOME PSYCHOLOGICALLY ADAPTED TO
THE CONCEPT OF DETERRENCE, AND THE BALANCE OF KILLING
POWER. ALSO, THERE HAS BEEN LITTLE GROWTH IN MUTUAL
TRUST OVER THE YEARS. MORE THAN 30 YEARS HAVE
PASSED WITHOUT A WORLD WAR, SO THAT A WHOLE GENERATION
HAS GROWN UP TO WHICH GLOBAL CONFLICT IS AN EPISODE
IN THE HISTORY BOOKS AND NOT A DIRECT EXPERIENCE.
TRUE, THERE HAS BEEN CONSTANT FIGHTING IN DIFFERENT
PARTS OF THE WORLD; BUT THESE "BRUSH FIRES" HAVE
FLARED UP AND DIED DOWN WITHOUT CONSUMING THE HUMAN
RACE.

THUS, WHAT MR. MACBRIDE IS ASKING FOR IS A CHANGE OF
MIND, AN ENORMOUS ACT OF WILL AND IMAGINATION. IT
IS DIFFICULT AT THE BEST OF TIMES FOR INDIVIDUALS TO
COME TO TERMS WITH A THREAT TO THEIR SURVIVAL; MOST
OF THEM RETAIN A CHILD-LIKE BELIEF THAT DYING IS
WHAT OTHERS DO. AT THE SAME TIME, THERE IS NO
DENYING THE ANCIENT WISDOM THAT THE VERY POSSESSION
OF A WEAPON MEANS THAT SOONER OR LATER IT WILL BE
USED - WHETHER IT IS A PISTOL OR A NUCLEAR WAR-HEAD.

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MR. MACBRIDE RECOGNISED THE FUNDAMENTAL IMPORTANCE
OF ATTITUDES OF MIND WHEN HE TOLD THE ASSEMBLY THAT,
"CONCURRENTLY WITH A PROCESS OF CONCRETE DISARMAMENT
MEASURES, IT WILL BE ESSENTIAL TO CARRY ON A MASSIVE
EDUCATIONAL CAMPAIGN TO PROMOTE PEACE RATHER THAN
MILITARIAM." MANKIND, IN OTHER WORDS, WILL HAVE
TO EXTERPATE ITS "HISTORICAL AGGRESSIVE IMMORALITY."
IT IS A TALL ORDER, BUT IT IS THE BEST GUARANTEE OF
SURVIVAL. KRENE

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